

**USDA Forest Service, Washington Office,
State and Private Forestry, Cooperative Forestry**

FOREST RESOURCE COORDINATING COMMITTEE

CHARTER

1. Committee's Official Designation

Forest Resource Coordinating Committee

2. Authority

This charter for the Forest Resource Coordinating Committee (Committee) is hereby renewed pursuant to Section 8005 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Act) (Pub. L. No. 110-246), and established in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. (Pub. L. No. 92-463).

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities

The purpose of the Committee is to provide direction and coordination of actions within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), State Agencies, and the private sector; to effectively address the shared national priorities for private forest conservation listed below, with specific focus on owners of non-industrial private forest land:

- a. Conserving and managing working forest landscapes for multiple values and uses;
- b. Protecting forests from threats, including catastrophic wildfires, hurricanes, tornados, windstorms, snow or ice storms, flooding, drought, invasive species, insect or disease outbreak, or development, and restoring appropriate forest types in response to such threats; and
- c. Enhancing public benefits from private forests, including air and water quality, soil conservation, biological diversity, carbon storage, forest products, forestry-related jobs, production of renewable energy, wildlife, wildlife corridors and wildlife habitat, and recreation.

4. Description of Duties

The Committee shall be solely advisory in nature and shall:

- a. Provide direction and coordination of actions within the Department of Agriculture, and coordination with State agencies and the private sector, to effectively address the national priorities, with specific focus on non-industrial private forest land;
 - b. Clarify individual agency responsibilities of each agency represented on the Committee concerning the shared national priorities with specific focus on non-industrial private forest land;
 - c. Provide advice on the allocation of funds, including the competitive funds set-aside for Competitive Allocation of Funds to State Foresters and Competitive Allocation of Funds for Cooperative Forest Innovation Projects (Sections 8007 and 8008 of the Act); and
 - d. Assist the Secretary in developing and reviewing the report to Congress required by Section 8001(d) of the Act.
5. Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports

The Committee reports to the Secretary of Agriculture (Secretary) through the Chief of the Forest Service.
6. Support

Clerical, administrative, and financial support for the Committee will be provided by the Forest Service, State and Private Forestry, Cooperative Forestry staff.
7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years

Annual estimated operating costs of the Committee are \$64,000 with 1.0 full time equivalent staff support per year. Expenses to operate the Committee will be borne by the Forest Service.

Members of the Committee shall serve without pay, but may be allowed reimbursement for travel expenses including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized by 5 U.S.C. 5703. Expenses will be subject to review and approval by the Designated Federal Officer.
8. Designated Federal Officer

The Assistant Director of Cooperative Forestry or designee (a permanent Federal employee) serves as the Designated Federal Officer (DFO) of the Committee. The DFO (or alternate DFO) is to be appointed in accordance with agency procedures. The DFO will approve the Committee and subcommittee meetings, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Committee and subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the Committee reports.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings

The Committee is required to meet annually, but may meet as often as is necessary to complete its business. As required by FACA, the Committee will hold open meetings unless the Secretary determines that a meeting or a portion of a meeting may be closed to the public in accordance with Subsection C of Section 522(b).

The Committee shall not hold any meetings except at the call of, or with advance approval of, the DFO. Notice of each meeting shall be published in the Federal Register at least 15 days before each meeting. Committee members will be notified of the date, time, and place of each meeting.

10. Duration

Continuing.

11. Termination

In accordance with Departmental Regulations, unless renewed, the Committee will terminate 2 years from the date of filing the Charter. The Committee will be evaluated annually for its effective use and control by the Agency. Without a valid Charter, the Committee will not meet or take any action.

12. Membership and Designation

12a. This Committee will be fairly balanced in its membership in terms of the points of view represented and the functions to be performed. Steps will be taken to encourage fresh points of view, such as establishing staggered membership terms and limiting the number of renewed memberships.

12b. The Committee shall consist of 20 voting members who will be appointed as Representatives, Special Government Employees or Regular Government Employees, composed of the following:

1. Chief of the Forest Service;
2. Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service;
3. Administrator of the Farm Service Agency;
4. Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture;
5. At least 3 State Foresters or equivalent State officials for geographically diverse regions of the United States;
6. State Fish and Wildlife Agency;
7. Non-Industrial Private Forest Landowners;
8. Forest Industry;
9. Conservation Organizations;
10. Land-Grant University or College;
11. Private Forestry Consultant;
12. State Technical Committee; and

13. Such other persons, as determined by the Secretary, to be appropriate.

12c. Of these members, one will become the chairperson who is recognized for his or her ability to lead a group in a fair and focused manner and who has been briefed on the mission of this Committee. A co-chairperson may be assigned, especially to facilitate his or her transition to become the chairperson in the future.

12d. Ethics Statement

To maintain the highest levels of honesty, integrity and ethical conduct, no Committee or subcommittee member shall participate in any “specific party matters” (i.e., matters are narrowly focused and typically involve specific transactions between identified parties) such as a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, grant, agreement, or related litigation with the Department in which the member has a direct or indirect financial interest. This includes the requirement for Committee or Subcommittee members to immediately disclose to the DFO any specific party matter in which the member’s immediate family, relatives, business partners or employer would be directly seeking to financially benefit from the Committee’s recommendations. Members of the Committee shall be required to disclose their direct or indirect interest in leases, licenses, permits, contracts, or claims that involve lands or resources administered by the Forest Service, or in any litigation related thereto.

All members will receive ethics training to identify and avoid any actions that would cause the public to question the integrity of the Committee’s advice and recommendations. Members who are appointed as “Representatives” are not subject to Federal ethics laws because such appointment allows them to represent the point(s) of view of a particular group, business sector or segment of the public.

Members appointed as “Special Government Employees” (SGEs) are considered intermittent Federal employees and are subject to Federal ethics laws. SGE’s are appointed due to their personal knowledge, academic scholarship, background or expertise. No SGE may participate in any activity in which the member has a prohibited financial interest. Appointees who are SGEs are required to complete and submit a Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (OGE-450 form) and, upon request, USDA will assist SGEs in preparing these financial reports. To ensure the highest level of compliance with applicable ethical standards USDA will provide ethics training to SGEs on an annual basis. The provisions of these paragraphs are not meant to exhaustively cover all Federal ethics laws and do not affect any other statutory or regulatory obligations to which advisory committee members are subject.

12e. Equal opportunity practices in accordance with USDA policies will be followed in all appointments to the Committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the Committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by USDA, membership will include to the extent possible, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent all racial and ethics groups, minorities, women and men, and persons with disabilities.

13. Subcommittees

The Forest Service has the authority to create subcommittees. Subcommittees must report back to the parent committee, and must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency.

14. Recordkeeping

The records of this Committee, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the committee, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 26, Item 2 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552. Information about this Committee is available online at:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/frcc/index.shtml>

15. Filing Date

7/16/2015